



Come to Your House

Sallam, Sara

On display

Title/Description: Come to Your House

Artist/Maker: Sallam, Sara

Born: 2022

Object Type: Installation

Accession Number: 50931

Production Place: England

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In 1956, Robert and Lisa Sainsbury purchased a wall fragment that had been removed earlier from an ancient Egyptian tomb. Within three years, they added to their collection an ancient Egyptian funerary mask and a pectoral; both had been detached from mummified bodies. The mourner

depicted on the wall fragment, the two guardian gods embossed on the pectoral, and the portrait drawn on the wooden mask, each had an original funerary function. They were meant to guide their deceased companions on the journey to the afterlife.

In this mixed media installation *Come To Your House*, Egyptian artist-in-residence Sara Sallam responds to the displacement of these funerary objects far from their companions. Sallam's starting point was researching what these objects may wish for. Realising their close integration into ancient Egyptian funerary practices, she negotiates with this work how to bring their former functions back into the museum. By portraying them performing a funeral together, Sallam imagines them finally serving their purpose; the mourner recites the lamentations of Isis and Nephtys, the guardians sing a spell to protect the deceased's heart, and the portrait calls the soul to return to the body. Covering herself in a shroud of linen and lying in British reed beds, Sallam offers the objects a visualisation of the imagined arrival of an Egyptian body to a displaced, foreign Aaru, a heavenly paradise covered in reeds, not in Egypt but in the UK.

Come To Your House is Sallam's attempt to acknowledge the agency of these objects despite their confinement inside display cases, rejecting, in turn, their framing as artworks to be merely looked at.

Tania Moore 2022
